

Staff Report – Agenda Item 6B

General Plan and Environmental Impact Report Candlestick Point State Recreation Area

I. DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

California State Parks recommends that the State Park and Recreation Commission (Commission) adopt the proposed resolution to approve the Preliminary General Plan/Final Environmental Impact Report (GP/FEIR) for Candlestick Point State Recreation Area (the park).

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Candlestick Point State Recreation Area is located in the City and County of San Francisco along the southeastern waterfront, adjacent to San Francisco Bay. Acquired in 1972 and operated by California State Parks, the park occupies 151 acres in San Francisco's Bayview Hunter's Point neighborhood, and is surrounded by industrial and residential uses and Candlestick Park stadium. The park is the first and one of the few intensely urban state parks in the State Park System.

The process of updating the park's general plan began in early 2010, in response to the proposed Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project to be constructed adjacent to the park property. This redevelopment project will dramatically alter the neighborhood surrounding the park, replacing the existing Candlestick Park stadium, vacant lands, and other areas with a large, mixed-use development. This redevelopment project will enhance the relationship of the park with the proposed surrounding neighborhood and is expected to both increase visitation and attract a more diverse type of user. In addition, California State Parks entered into a land exchange agreement with the City and County of San Francisco that will reconfigure the park boundary – adding land in some of the narrowest areas and removing it from others. In exchange, State Parks received funding to improve and enhance Candlestick Point State Recreation Area.

This general plan serves as the first tier of a tiered General Plan/Environmental Impact Report that will guide the development and management of the park for public use and resource protection for the next 20-plus years. The plan establishes goals and guidelines to assist in the daily and long-term management of the park to ensure that its resources are protected, while encouraging a variety of recreation activities. Projects proposed by this plan will require California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance for project-level, second tier evaluations of the potential impacts.

III. PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS

In November of 1978, the Commission approved a Resource Management Plan, General Development Plan, and Environmental Impact Report for Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. The Commission approved an amendment to this plan in May 1987 which included the primary goals of improving urban quality of life, celebrating the San Francisco Bay and its natural and cultural resources, and providing public access to the shoreline.

California State Parks has prepared this general plan revision in response to proposed redevelopment in the City of San Francisco. This general plan revision responds to the external conditions affecting Candlestick Point State Recreation Area and sets forth a vision that is consistent with the park's mission while also adapting to large forces of change. All planning and design in the plan stems from the park's unique declaration of purpose: *To make*

available to the people the recreational opportunities, whether passive or active, that are offered by the existence of the shoreline and adjacent bay waters. This general plan revision builds on the vision set forth in earlier plans to create a state park that is not only enjoyed by the residents of San Francisco, but also serves as a destination for residents of the state of California, other states, and the rest of the world.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The general plan process for Candlestick Point State Recreation Area began in January 2010 with a public scoping meeting and workshop at Bret Harte Elementary School, located about a half a mile from the park on Gilman Avenue in the Bayview neighborhood. Two additional public workshops were conducted in July 2010 and November 2010. Additionally, interagency input was obtained through agency collaboration as part of the environmental review process and from in-person meetings with members of the planning team.

Public outreach included a variety of methods. In addition to the three public workshops, a project web page provided information, and updates were provided via email, postcards, flyers, and newsletters. Notices of the public meetings were placed in the park and in local businesses.

All comments on the plan were fully considered, ensuring that community members and other stakeholders were fully vested in a transparent planning process.

California State Parks posted the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for a 45-day review period beginning on January 5, 2012 and ending February 21, 2012.

V. HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The construction of Candlestick Park stadium and its parking lot began in 1958, and with it the haphazard filling of the adjacent tidelands in the Hunter's Point Reclamation District. The landfill that created the parking lot allowed access to reach and fill tidelots further out in the bay. This fill activity turned the shoreline into the uninviting wasteland of junkyards and dump sites that was purchased by the State of California for Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. The entire original recreation area is situated on landfill.

The 1978 general plan had a goal of allowing Candlestick Point State Recreation Area to enable the State Park System to extend recreational and cultural facilities to urban areas, where opportunities for access to the system had traditionally been limited. Making the system available in an urban setting relates urban dwellers to the natural environment. The benefits of that relationship can be demonstrated by programs that understand the city as an ecosystem, different than, but part of, the natural ecosystem of the park. The May 1987 general plan amendment addressed wind surfing facilities, user groups, and transportation access policies at the park.

The revised general plan addresses modern development conditions and helps to fulfill the legislative requirements of Senate Bill language. In October 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill 792 which authorized reconfiguration of Candlestick Point State Recreation Area and provided funding to assist with park improvements, operations, and maintenance. The reconfiguration will transfer a net total of 26.9 acres of land from the park, primarily along the park's western border, for development associated with the Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project; and add 6.6 acres to the park in the Hermit's Cove Beach and Yosemite Slough areas (San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and San Francisco Planning Department, 2009). The total acreage of Candlestick Point State Recreation Area, with this revised boundary configuration, will be 131.5 acres.

VI. GENERAL PLAN ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

The following issues and opportunities were considered during the development of the draft general plan for Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. These included:

- Provide quiet, respite-based recreation and activities focused on nature education and stewardship at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area while remaining true to the park's classification as a state recreation area.
- Balance the interests of local visitors, including the new residents of the planned Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project adjacent to the park, with those of visitors from across the state and beyond.
- Expand interpretive and educational activities at the park. Identified themes include the evolution of San Francisco Bay, the history of the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood, wetland and shoreline ecology, and shipwrecks off Candlestick Point, among others.
- Highlight Candlestick Point State Recreation Area as a state park with a specific mission and purpose, distinct from a city or neighborhood park. The park can serve as a gateway to the State Park System, providing information about other state parks in the Bay Area and across California at information kiosks and a visitor information center or a community "storefront" within the adjacent planned development.
- Provide a balance of transit and parking to meet the needs of park visitors from throughout the region and state as well as from the surrounding neighborhood, in light of the anticipated increase in demand for parking in the area following construction of the Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project.
- Coordinate with regional planning efforts to extend the Bay Trail through the park and provide connections to the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail.
- Preserve and enhance existing stands of trees, low scrubland, wetlands, and shoreline habitat. Design stormwater management facilities for the park to minimize their use of park land and to allow space for other programs within the park.
- Implement an adaptive management approach to sea level rise. New facilities should be sited outside of areas expected to experience the most coastal flooding in the future. Shoreline treatments, such as berms and levees, can also prevent flooding of areas requiring protection, such as those that experience heavy visitor use. Other areas of the park, however, may undertake softer strategies, such as the creation of tidal marsh to reduce the impacts of storm surges and flooding.
- Address visitor capacity and land use compatibility at the park in light of the planned Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project, which will introduce thousands of new residents to the neighborhood. Coordinate with the City and County of San Francisco to integrate the park into the planned development while maintaining the park's identity as a state recreation area.
- Provide a sense of security at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area while continuing to allow visitors to connect to nature and the Bay.
- Continue to provide spaces for community gathering and expand cultural and recreation options in the park to serve both current and future park users.

The following implementation issues at the park will require further study and analysis beyond the scope of the draft general plan. These issues will be addressed by adaptive management strategies during general plan implementation and park management:

ISSUE #1: Forecasting Visitation. The level of visitation based on the future residents of the adjacent planned Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project and other development projects in the neighborhood is difficult to predict, especially considering development phasing and the evolving demand for the park and its facilities.

ANALYSIS: While visitation levels are expected to increase, it is not known by how much or at what rate the increase will occur over the next 20 years. Adaptive management with ongoing monitoring and adjustments will be used to respond to changing visitation levels and demand for park facilities.

ISSUE #2: Parking Management. The appropriate parking management strategy for the park will require further study.

ANALYSIS: Adequate parking is important to ensure access for a wide range of users, including visitors from other areas of the region or state and people with disabilities. In addition, specific recreational activities, such as windsurfing, non-motorized boating, and some group activities require vehicles to transport equipment and will require parking adjacent to the activity. Candlestick Point State Recreation Area would provide at least the same amount of parking as under existing conditions (currently there are over 275 spaces available), with the potential for additional parking.

As stated in Section 3.2.2 of the general plan, Access and Linkages (page 3-5 of the plan), the planned Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Shipyard Phase II Project will provide parking, including a large garage for the regional retail district near the Last Port area of the park and residential parking at a ratio of one space per unit. However, residential parking will be sold or leased separately from individual residential units (Candlestick Point-Hunters Point Phase II Draft EIR). It is possible that future residents may forego purchasing or leasing off-street parking and use street parking instead, which would increase demand for parking in the neighborhood, including that for parking within the park. Determination of Candlestick Point State Recreation Area's parking capacity will need to consider the parking and alternative transportation upgrades planned for the surrounding redevelopment as well as the expected increase in parking demand within the neighborhood.

State Parks staff will work with the City and County of San Francisco to address parking issues and to ensure that adequate parking is available for park visitors. Possible parking management options include the following:

- Utilize an adaptive management approach, starting with low parking fees (e.g., \$1 per hour up to \$6 per day) during park hours and monitor parking impacts from non-park users. If it is determined that non-park users are negatively affecting parking capacity, adjust fee rates or implement other options outlined below.
- Set the parking fees at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area to be commensurate with the cost of metered parking and parking garage fees outside of the park. By ensuring that parking at the park is available at the same cost as parking outside of the park, there would be no incentive for non-park users (e.g., local residents and employees of nearby businesses) to park at the park. The impact to park users would be costly parking rates.
- Install pay machines inside the park and require visitors to Candlestick Point State Recreation Area to enter the park to pay for parking. This would require visitors to walk into the park (beyond the parking area) to pay for parking, which would be inconvenient if they were not planning to visit the park. This would discourage non-park users from parking. Parking fees could be reduced below metered parking and garage fees with this option.

ISSUE #3: Sea Level Rise. Projected sea level rise and the effect on the Bay and in particu-

lar the shoreline of the park will require ongoing planning, monitoring, and management.

ANALYSIS: Future planning efforts include the preparation of project-specific environmental compliance documents for implementation of subsequent projects. These documents should tier off of and be consistent with the general plan's program EIR. Securing any permits required for future implementation of projects would also be part of subsequent planning actions. While some analysis was completed for the restoration of Yosemite Slough, sea level rise, its impacts, and management strategies for impacts are not provided in the draft general plan on a park-wide basis.

VII. LEGAL ISSUES

There are no known legal issues relating to the Commission's approval of the General Plan/EIR for Candlestick Point State Recreation Area.

VIII. FISCAL IMPACT

There is no immediate fiscal impact as a result of adopting this general plan. However, approving the plan will provide additional revenue and concession opportunities in the future, including the transfer of development funds to California State Parks as part of the land transfer with the City of San Francisco.

Attachments:

Figure 1: Candlestick Point State Recreation Area Regional Location

Figure 2: Preferred Plan with Management Zones

Figure 3: Draft Concept Master Plan

Figure 1: Candlestick Point State Recreation Area Regional Location



Figure 2: General Plan Preferred Alternative



CANDLESTICK MEADOWS

HEART OF THE PARK

THE POINT

THE NECK

LAST PORT

Yosemite Slough

South Basin Shoreline

PROPOSED CANDLESTICK POINT NEIGHBORHOOD (BY OTHERS)

PROPOSED EXECUTIVE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD (BY OTHERS)

PROPOSED HUNTER'S POINT SHIPYARD NEIGHBORHOOD (BY OTHERS)

PROPOSED BRIDGE BY OTHERS

Bay Water Trail

Jack Rabbit Beach

Hermit's Cove

Candlestick Cove

Bayview Hill

Ingalls

Jennings

Keith

Third

Hawes

Carroll

Donier

Egbert

Fitzgerald

Gilman

Walker

Hollister

Ingerson

Jamestown

Harney

P St

D St

8th

9th

C St

B St

M St

Earl

State Park Information Center

Restroom

Viewing Area

Fishing + Viewing Pier

Public Parking

Landforms / Wind-Shelters

Grassland / Scrub Habitat Focus Area

Pipe Easement

Bridge over Swale

Landforms / Wind-Shelters

Non Motorized Boat Launch + Viewing Pier (ADA)

Boat-Building Center

Concession, Restroom + Bike/Boat Rental

Enhanced Beach

Landforms / Wind-Shelters

Public + Street Food Vendor Parking

Enhanced Windsurfer Facilities

Water Access Ramp & Secondary Non-Motorized Boat Launch

Pier or Breakwater Fishing + Viewing

Enhanced Beach

Hermit's Cove Terraces

Restroom

Interpretive Plaza

Iconic Art

Enhanced Beach

Candlestick Cove

Bay Water Trail

Bay Trail Underpass

Bay Trail Boardwalk Underpass

Overlook

Outdoor Classroom + Interpretive Area

Restroom

Terraced Tidal Marsh Zones

Fishing + Viewing Pier

Nature Theater

Landforms / Wind-Shelters

Public Parking

Grassland / Scrub Habitat Focus Area

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LANDSCAPE TYPES

- ## GATHERING AREA

- ## PATH TYPES

- ## FACILITIES

- DRAFT

04.10.12

